

# STATE AGENCY COVID-19 UPDATES

**May 19, 2020**

## **State fire marshal working on guidance for bars, restaurants**

Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD) code officials are developing guidance for bar and restaurant owners who are considering options for increasing capacity in their establishments once they are allowed to reopen. The SFMD has heard that business owners in other states are hanging shower curtains, plastic sheeting and other combustible partitions up in bars and restaurants to increase capacity. Those partitions must be flame resistant and cannot impede fire sprinklers. SFMD staff will distribute the guidance to local code officials to share in their communities.

## **Mortgage relief consumer guide available for those affected by COVID-19**

This consumer alert from the Minnesota Department of Commerce provides information to those impacted by COVID-19 and seeking assistance and relief with monthly mortgage payments — including delayed and reduced monthly payment options — for homeowners with federally backed loans seeking to obtain mortgage assistance. Read consumer alerts from the Minnesota Department of Commerce [online here](#).

## **Schools reporting more than 13.2 million meals served**

The Minnesota Department of Education has asked districts and charter schools to self-report the daily number of meals they are serving to the school communities and the number of students receiving school-age care.

- The final count over the seventh week of distance learning, with about 327 school districts and charter schools reporting, are:
  - 2,150,064 meals served
  - 7,188 average school-age students cared for each day
- The combined total for the first seven weeks of distance learning, with about 342 school districts and charter schools reporting, are:
  - 13,295,340 meals served
  - 7,031 average school-age students cared for each day

## **Fifteen percent decrease in 911 calls from year-to-year**

Call volumes for Minnesota public safety answering points (PSAPs), also known as 911 dispatch centers, saw a 15 percent year-to-year decrease last week, according to statistics provided by CenturyLink to the Department of Public Safety division of Emergency Communication Networks (DPS-ECN).

- Minnesota PSAPs answered 51,558 calls between May 10 through May 16 this year.
- Minnesota PSAPs received 60,500 calls during that same comparable week (May 12-18, 2019).

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## Number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients up 57 in one day

- 748 reported deaths — an increase of 17 since May 18; 13 of the 18 deaths were people in long-term care facilities.
- 17,029 lab-confirmed cases in Minnesota — an increase of 665 cases since May 18.
- 545 patients are currently hospitalized (up 57 from May 18) with 229 in intensive care units (ICU). The number of ICU patients is the same as May 18.
- 11,540 patients have been released from isolation.
- Learn more about the latest lab-diagnosed cases on the [COVID-19 public dashboard](#).

## Increased testing remains top priority for SEOC

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) remains fully activated and staffed either physically or virtually by all state agencies and several volunteer organizations.

- Military Affairs teams will be conducting tests today at seven different locations as SEOC staff remain focused on increasing COVID-19 testing.
  - New staff are joining the SEOC to help expand testing and contact tracing.
  - Staff are working to ramp up testing to 10 long-term care facilities per day.
- The SEOC continues supporting the state hotline, which received 63 calls on May 18. Employees are answering calls at 651-297-1304 or 800-657-3504. The hotline is currently operating from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.
  - The hotline will operate on Memorial Day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Traffic volumes remain below 2019 levels

The Minnesota Department of Transportation continues to monitor [traffic volumes](#) statewide.

- Metro area: Traffic volumes on Monday, May 18 were down 15 percent compared to Monday averages for May 2019.
- Statewide: Traffic volumes on Monday, May 18 were down 14 percent compared to Monday averages for May 2019.